Minotaur - Rounwytha as Decoding the Labyrinth

It has been said, and indeed it seems ostensibly true, that there are inherent contradictions within the corpus of the Order of Nine Angles (ONA) that are supposed to test the individual, perhaps one of the largest ones being the very sharp differences between the ancient, wordless, pagan tradition of the Rouning (Rounwytha), and the modern and outwardly satanic tradition of the Sevenfold Way.

Indeed it also seems true that the Way of the Rounwytha is the most neglected aspect of the ONA in literature, amongst self-proclaimed adherents there is little appreciation for its simplicity, pagan nature, and emphasis on women, instead there being an unhealthy degree of focus on far-right extremism, satanism, the "sinister", and other such trappings. It seems to evade many why such a path is valuable, and why it holds importance within the ONA, with it being said that it is "one of the core principles on which the ONA is based." [1]

Rather than being viewed as a totally separate path, it is my opinion that the ethos of the Sevenfold Way and the Way of the Rounwytha (as well as the more recent Hebdomian Way) are in alignment, with the Seveonfold Way being designed as a modern ἄνοδος for some to imitate the knowing that a Rounwytha possesses, and thus the paths should be understood as maintaining the same esoteric core, this core perhaps being best described as the 'sinisterly-numinous tradition' due to it seemingly pre-dating the ONA, and surviving beyond it via the Hebdomian Way.

If understood as such then much like the later novels of the Deofel Quintet, the Way of the Rounwytha may be used to cut away at the mythoi and forms used within the Labyrinthos Mythologicus of the ONA to reveal this shared esoteric core.

The Way of the Rounwytha is said to have the following characteristics:
"i) There are no named deities or divinities or 'spirits'. No 'gods', no 'goddess'. No demons.
ii) There are no spells or conjurations or spoken charms or curses; no 'secret scripts' and no 'secret teachings'; indeed no teachings at all.
iii) There are no 'secret book(s)' or manuscripts; indeed, there are no writings.
iv) There are no ritual or Occult or 'wiccan' or 'satanist' elements at all.
v) There is no calendar, as calendars are usually understood, and thus no set dates/times for festivities or commemorations.
vi) There are no oaths made, no pledges written or said.
vii) There is no organization, no dogma, no codification of beliefs, no leader(s), no hierarchy, and no stages or grades of 'attainment'.
Four other distinctive features of this Way are perhaps worthy of note: (α) that there is no interest in, no concern with, matters beyond one's family, one's local area of

dwelling, and beyond such problems of one's neighbours that they personally bring to one's attention because they may require some help or assistance; (β) that it is rooted in and nourished by a specific rural Marcher area of a specific country and cannot easily be transplanted elsewhere, as it most certainly cannot live - be lived - in any urban area; (γ) that men are the exception, women the rule; and (δ) that there is no conformity to conventional social/moral rôles but rather certain accepted practices." [2]

With respect to i), the following quotes are very valuable in tandem with this in relation to the Dark Gods (or 'acausal entities') of the Sevenfold Way:
"Which all imply that acausal entities are not material and not discrete objects, but rather what we may conceive of as types of (or variations in or patterns of) acausal energy, formless and timeless, and able to translocate to anywhere in the acausal continuum instantaneously and exist (or be manifest) in various acausal locations simultaneously." [3]; "(...) esoteric empathy inclines us toward a knowing of the numinous essence that such a denoting obscures or hides" [4] As such, these "Dark Gods" are seemingly themselves another way of viewing the acausal, a form with a use appropriate to the lower stages of the Sevenfold Way (Neophyte/Initiate/External Adept), strengthened by their absence in the more recent Hebdomian Way. As a Rounwytha has a direct apprehension of the acausal they have no use for such forms, and thus the mythology of the Dark Gods is absent.

With respect to ii) and iii), it may indicate that such secret teachings, such as Hostia for the Sevenfold Way, and teachings more generally, are themselves irrelevant. Rather what matters is a certain kind of living and developing certain skills to aid in this living, such as living rurally and developing esoteric empathy to aid this lifestyle in you and others (humans and non-humans). Thus, texts such as Naos are not important as some kind of dogmatic corpus, rather they attempt to inspire people to live in a certain way, to develop themselves with presented techniques and become someone rather different, as indicated here: "(...) the interior change of individuals, this esoteric alchemy, involves individuals: (1) developing a certain type of personal character; (2) acquiring certain skills both exoteric and esoteric; (3) acquiring - from both personal experience (pathei-mathos) and from an intellectual learning - a certain initiated knowledge and insight; and (4) living in a particular manner as a result of the foregoing." [5]

With respect to ii) and iv), it may indicate that such things, the elements of ceremonial sorcery and satanism, are themselves illusory much like the Dark Gods, they are a form with a use appropriate to the earlier stages of development. This is also seemingly reflected in the Deofel Quintet, whereby the earlier novels (Falcifer, Temple of Satan) have a focus on ceremonial sorcery and satanism, whilst the later novels (The Greyling Owl, Breaking the Silence Down) are largely lacking in them,

instead focusing on the manipulation and changing of individuals that is appropriate to higher stages of development.

With respect to v), the lack of calendars as usually understood is potentially a reference to alchemical seasons, how a Rounwytha can know, sans denotatum such as a Gregorian calendar with its fixed time when the seasons flux and how due to their acausal empathy, an intimation of which is provided in Naos with its helical model of time and the symbolism used to denote the alchemical seasons (the following may be incorrect):

Aries (♈) - □ (□), Taurus (♉) - □ (□), Gemini (♊) - □ (□),
Libra (♎) - □ (□), Aquarius (♒) - □ (□), Pisces (♓) - □ (□),
Cancer (♋) - □ (□), Scorpio (♏) - □ (□), Sagittarius (♐) - □ (□),
Capricorn (♑) - □ (□), Leo (♌) - □ (□), Virgo (♍) - □ (□).

With respect to vi), this may be specific to the Way of Rounwytha. Whilst there are also no oaths/pledges within the Sevenfold Way (beyond the initiation rite which may itself be illusory, see below), it seems strange to include a note against oaths/pledges since nothing within the ONA corpus indicates something against them. Perhaps it is a knowing germane to the Adept, knowing as they do how fickle human influence over certain matters is, and thus it is unwise to promise certain things, but aside from this it does not seem to cleanly fit in.

With respect to vii), these things themselves are apparent within the Sevenfold Way with the exception of grades of attainment. However, it is possible that such stages/grades are an indication of advancement, not in themselves existing as discrete, separate stages. There is no concrete separation between, say, Neophyte and Initiate beyond a potential psychological one developed due to an initiation rite, rather these stages/grades show the skills of a person, what they have been through, the degree of acausality that exists within the nexion that is their mind, and therefore can be useful tools to discern between who knows what, also suggested here: "That is, the conventional magick of the ToW, of books such as Naos, of rituals, is but a beginning - through such things, the individual initiate acquires experience and knowledge, and also develops as an individual: in terms of character. In a simplistic sense, they move, through the Grades, beyond "The Abyss", toward The Goal, which is the transformation of the individual and the emergence of a new type of being, beyond the Adept." [6]

With respect to (α), within the Sevenfold Way this may be manifest during the Internal Adept grade, as it seemingly incorporates an increasingly internal focus, away from politics, sorcery, and other forms and towards changing of people, known personally and guided personally. That is, the wisdom of a sinister Adept means they understand the inter-connectedness of things, the thread that weaves through us all, and attempt to weave this thread itself rather than using some form

to weave by proxy.

With respect to (β), this most likely ceases to be a consideration due to the nature of the Sevenfold Way which can be adopted regardless of things such as geographical location and is therefore a trait of solely Rounwytha. Or, alternately, it may be a consideration for some of those who pass through the Abyss, whom decide to take on a reclusive, rural lifestyle much like the Rounwytha, a reminder that it needs a specific environment to nurture this type of lifestyle.

With respect to (γ), this is apparent within the ONA itself. Whilst online the focus is largely male, if we are to take their word, in the real world women are more likely to possess certain skills (e.g empathy, intuition, manners, charm) that make them suitable to be part of the "Inner ONA", a sort of extended family that maintains the Camlad Rouning, all of whom are at least of the grade Internal Adept, to quote: "(...) the inner ONA is akin to an extended family who maintain, and who continue, on a personal basis, this particular esoteric tradition. Unsurprisingly; the majority of those in this inner ONA are women." [7]

With respect to (δ), this is also apparent within the ONA itself. Rather than depending on socially accepted morality (or legality), it encourages an exploring of these areas, to go to and beyond your own boundaries up to an extent, with certain practices being discouraged. A clear example of this is with rape, whereby texts surrounding opfers and their selection, along with the Deofel Quintet, show a clear disdain for it, as seen here: "The insight of the understanding made her laugh; then cry. (...) Apthone's attempted rape, her own anger, the fear and humiliation that had possessed her, had broken through this appearance to the real essence of the woman beyond. She was a unique individual and did not have to conform to someone else's set of rules or ideas." [8]

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[1] A Glossary of Order of Nine Angles Terms

[2] The Rounwytha Way - In History and Modern Context

[3] Some Notes Concerning Language, Chants, and Acausal Entities

[4] Denotatum - The Esoteric Problem With Names

[5] O9A - On Being Unpopular - Discernment, Pathei-Mathos and the Initiatory Occult Quest

[6] The Five Dimensional Magick of the Seventh Way

[7] The Rounwytha Tradition

[8] Breaking the Silence Down